

# Bald Eagle Research Institute Annual Report

January 1999 - December 1999

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# **Jay Hammond Bald Eagle Research Institute Annual Report January 1999 - December 1999**

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## **Purpose:**

The purpose of the Institute is the development of research, educational, veterinary science, and library resource programs designed to enhance the knowledge of survival in nature and propagation of the American bald eagle.

## **Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve:**

In 1982 the State of Alaska established the Alaska Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve, 48,000 acres of land set aside for the preservation of the American bald eagle and its habitat along the Chilkat River in Haines, Alaska. The primary purpose of establishing this preserve is to protect and perpetuate the Chilkat bald eagles and their essential habitats.

## **American Bald Eagle Foundation (ABEF):**

Soon after the preserve was established, the first and only American Bald Eagle Foundation was incorporated as a private, non-political and non-profit organization (December 23, 1992). The primary goal of this foundation is to help manage the goals of the preserve as stated above with the following specific goals:

- \* Meet the propagation and conservation goals of the Articles of Incorporation
- \* Organize an umbrella organization that will bring together all national and international agencies interested in the welfare of the American Bald Eagle.
- \* Establish financial support for educational and research activities.
- \* Establish an interpretive center in the Chilkat River Valley.
- \* Support Eagle rehabilitation efforts in Alaska.
- \* Establish and support the American Bald Eagle Jay Hammond Research Institute.
- \* Construct support facilities in Haines for the American Bald Eagle Jay Hammond Research Institute such as research personnel and students.

The ABEF is located at the Bald Eagle Center in Haines, Alaska, and presently represents the only chapter of the organization. It is supported by donations from businesses and tourists plus membership fees.

## **Bald Eagle Research Institute:**

The BERI, working with the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS), established the Institute in 1989. The Institute objectives include:

- \* Research
- \* Education
- \* Veterinary science
- \* Library research

The institute's nine member board of directors includes three representatives from the ABEF, three from UAS, and three public members. Basic Institute support is provided by the ABEF.

The University of Alaska Southeast provides the following:

- \* Facilities as needed and as available.
- \* Housing bald eagle literature in Egan Library.
- \* Laboratory equipment in conjunction with institute and student activities.
- \* Computer services, as needed in conjunction with basic needs.
- \* Audio / visual equipment support through faculty, student and courses.
- \* Support to faculty directly involved with the Institute or bald eagle courses.

Although associated with and supported by UAS, the Institute receives no university money and is not under the UAS administration.

## **Incorporation:**

On July 30, 1997 the American Bald Eagle Jay Hammond Research Institute was incorporated as a Domestic Nonprofit Corporation in Alaska. The incorporators were Dennis Russell, Bruce Wright, and Scott Foster. In 1999, the name was changed to the Bald Eagle Research Institute.

The 2000 board members follow:

Bruce Wright , chair  
Phil Schempf, vice chair  
Mrya Howe, treasurer  
Scott Foster, secretary  
Dennis Russell  
Jim King  
Mike Jacobson  
Dan Hart  
Sandy Harbanuk

The following members were designated for the following terms:

Public members:

Mike Jacobson, term expires 2000  
Phil Schempf, term expires 2001  
Sandy Harbanuk, term expires 2002

UAS appointed members:

Bruce Wright, term expires 2000  
Jim King, term expires 2001  
Scott Foster, term expires 2002

Foundation appointed members:

Dan Hart, term expires 2000  
Dennis Russell, term expires 2001  
Myra Howe, term expires 2002

## **Executive Summary:**

1999 was a year for redefining the goals of the Institute. During the year it became clear funding for construction of an Institute facility would not be as available as earlier expected. The board's emphasis shifted from planning for a building to outlining smaller projects to be accomplished in shorter time periods. The chief goal was to secure funding to publishing the book, "Bald Eagles in Alaska." Another project was to establish an endowment with the University of Alaska Foundation for donations. Throughout the year Institute, Foundation and Haines chapter board members grappled with how to define relationships and secure funding.

# 1999 Monthly Research Institute Activity Summary:

## January :

- ← Myra Howe was appointed to a three year board term replacing Jamie Parsons who resigned.
- ← John Eiler and Scott Foster were reappointed to the board.
- ← The Foundation was requested to include the Institute in the Foundation's annual goals.
- ← Suggestions for short-term Institute goals included: finishing the "Bald Eagles of Alaska" book, certification program for eagle observers, donate a large eagle picture to Bartlett Hospital, create an eagle display, Sea Week, encourage public reporting of where eagles are sitting in trees, create a fund to provide research seed money and request proposals, support Foundation's research in Haines, help fund interns wanting to help with Haines research, establish the Institute as the funding source for research, up date eagle bibliography annually, improve the Institute website, seek consistent financial support, bird counts, CBJ endorsement of the concept for a building and land, expand publicity, organize lectures, find and organize areas for public displays (library, hospital, Nugget Mall, etc.), eagle fact sheet, update for tour operators, gather historic descriptions (diaries, etc) of early experiences with eagles, eagle tour, develop Power Point presentation of the Institute.
- ← Suggestions for long-term Institute goals and objectives included: develop prospectus, solidify land acquisition for Institute facility, proceed on facility construction, develop a source for funds and grants, study skins to see the variety of eagle development, ecological study of eagles in urban settings, urban eagle watch program, link with complimentary organizations such as the Chamber, Rotary, private companies,

tour companies, Earth Watch program in Juneau, endowed chair at UAS, endowed research, benefactor program

## February

- ← The board was told the national Bald Eagle Foundation is not currently functioning. Haines is the only chapter.
- ← No decisions have been made on funding the "Bald Eagles of Alaska" book.
- ← Institute selects goals that include: combining efforts for projects with the Juneau Raptor Center, create a local tourism brochure, help with a Raptor Center moveable display, Improve the Institute website, publicize the webset

## March

- ← Efforts continue from Haines chapter staff to revive the national foundation.
- ← The "Bald Eagles of Alaska" book is about half reformatted.
- ← Board members were asked to contact well known officials to offer endorsements for the "Bald Eagles of Alaska" book.
- ← Three amendments to the Institute bylaws were adopted. They included adopting the name Jay Hammond Bald Eagle Research Institute, changing the title of the officers, and changing the procedures to amend the bylaws.

## April

- ← Questions continue about reviving the national foundation and about funding for the Institute.
- ← Jim King works on establishing an endowed chair at UAS.
- ← A letter was sent to the mayor and Borough Assembly expressing the Institute's interest in two land parcels near UAS for an eventual building.

## May

- ← UAS Bald Eagle distance delivery course won a national award from the US Forest Service.
- ← Efforts continue to secure endorsements for the book and to revive the Foundation.
- ← As many as five research assistant will work out of the Haines chapter during the summer.

## June, July

- ← Summer recess

## August

- ← Final draft of “Bald Eagles of Alaska” should be ready by the end of the year.
- ← Funding for printing has not yet been determined.
- ← The board passed a resolution to the Foundation requesting a specific timetable for funding for the book.

## October

- ← Discussions continued with Haines chapter members about funding for the book.
- ← Dan Hart writes that the Foundation is willing to fund the book at \$22,000, but questions are raised about the timeliness of the book and the feeling it may require significant editing.
- ← Alternative publishing options are explored and they include using an academic press, Alaska Sea Grant, Native corporation funding.
- ← The Foundation is asked to provide periodic progress reports on their projects.

## December

- ← There is some interest by printers in the publishing book, but they want an electronic copy when it is ready.
- ← The board establishes an endowment with the University of Alaska Foundation.
- ← The board asks Dennis Russell to explore steps for the Institute to become a non-profit corporation that is separate from the Foundation.
- ← A financial account was established at Merrill Lynch. It will accept gifts in various forms including money, stocks, etc.

## **History of the American Bald Eagle Research Institute--A predecessor of the Jay Hammond American Bald Eagle Research Institute.**

A Bald Eagle research institute was the dream of Dave Olerud, Founding Father of the American Bald Eagle Foundation. Working with the Foundation Board and Chancellor Marshall Lind of UAS an organization was launched in August 1989. Expected funding failed to develop. Legally the Institute expired in 1992 when none of the 3 year terms on the Board were refilled. Actually work on projects begun in 1989 continued and evolved into the reborn Jay Hammond American Bald Eagle Research Institute in 1997.

In 1989 Anchorage attorney and Foundation Board member John Norman wrote the initial bylaws and articles of incorporation for the American Bald Eagle Research Insti-

tute (ABERI). A first meeting was convened at UAS for lunch then adjourned for a short flight and reconvened in Haines. Board member appointments from the Foundation were John Norman, Dave Harbour, Jim Scott, all of Anchorage; from UAS they were Rita O'Clair, Dick Griffin, Jim King; and Mayor Frank Wallace was appointed from Haines. King was elected chairman. Also appointed at this meeting were Honorary Board Members, Jerry Deppa of the Sitka Raptor Center, Hans Fluehler of Quebec, Marshall Lind UAS, Dick Luther UAS, Stephen McAlpine the Alaska Lieutenant Governor, and Dave & Charlotte Olerud of Haines. It was made clear at this meeting that ABERI would not do fund raising as that would be the responsibility of the Foundation.

Chancellor Lind had his dream too. At this time he had the UAS Office of Continuing Education, under Lee Paavola, developing a 3 credit correspondence study course entitled, Bald Eagles of Alaska's Coastal Rain Forest. Dick Luther was overall manager with Bruce Wright primary author and Marge Hermans editor. Helping was an advisory committee of Juneau eagle authorities that included the UAS members of the ABERI Board. It was soon evident that current information on Alaska's eagles was lacking. This suggested the idea of hosting a symposium on Bald Eagles In Alaska designed to be published as a reader for the course. Phil Schempf, raptor specialist with US Fish & Wildlife Service and member of Luther's advisory committee, agreed to be program chair and proceedings editor. Lee Paavola agreed to have his staff manage the logistics and any monies involved. The symposium went off beautifully, Nov. 8-10, 1990, except the field trip. The charter vessel ride up Lynn Canal to Haines had to be canceled due to a storm thus turning an expected cash profit into a loss for UAS.

About this time, the Alaska financial picture took a down turn and the boost the Foundation had expected to get from the state evaporated. At the same time the Raptor Center in Sitka, the Eagle Center in Haines and the Raptor Center in Anchorage all began expensive capital improvements and the Foundation had very little extra cash for research.

During this period ABERI continued Board meetings set up and arranged by Shirley Anderson of Chancellor Lind's staff. These were conference calls in the Chancellor's conference room. Shirley Anderson typed the minutes.

One objective of the ABERI had been to build a Bald Eagle bibliography and literature collection at the UAS Egan Library. The Foundation did find 3,000 dollars to help this effort. Professor O'Clair was able to hire her student, John Maniscalco. Contact was made with the National Wildlife Federation who advised they had no intention of upgrading their 1979 bibliography and in fact were glad to find a place to donate their Bald Eagle files. John was able to add a thousand titles to the two thousand the Federation had published 15 years previous. With help from Phil Schempf, copies of more than 600 of the titles were added to the library collection.

The first customer for the new Egan Library materials was Cary Anderson, Bald Eagle scholar from Anchorage who spent several days there. Anderson has since published two paper back Bald Eagle Books and there are more on the way.

The bibliography has been kept up to date by biology students at UAS. It is now available on disk or computer printout and receiving regular use.

Bruce Wright was selected to teach the Bald

Eagle correspondence course which to 1998 has been taken by nearly a thousand students from all across America and some foreign countries.

A 1991 effort by ABERI to attract a senior Bald Eagle authority to do a sabbatical at UAS, for teaching a science course, a popular course, doing a research project and designing a plan for a research institute, failed. Professor Jim Fraser of Virginia Polytech and State University was ready to come but money for half his salary was not available at time when everything at UAS was being cut. Dr. Fraser had done years of eagle research in Chesapeake Bay and had presented a paper at our conference. He recently suggested he might still be interested.

One objective of ABERI was to have an endowed academic chair in Bald Eagle ecology established at UAS for teaching and research. Applications for Juneau economic development funds and for EXXON oil spill settlement funds have both failed so far.

Producing the proceedings of the symposium for the expected "reader" proved more difficult than anticipated. Phil Schempf immediately distributed the scientific papers for the normal peer review process. Marge Hermans, in UAS employ, began editing the papers for English usage and getting them ready for formatting. But financial austerity hit and Marge was let go. Phil finished the peer review process and got all the papers on a computer disk but had no way to do the formatting. Eventually, UAS Dean John Pugh, gave permission for Amy Carroll, to work on the formatting, "when she had time." Bruce Wright, still in need of a reader for his now very successful course stepped in, and working with Amy

and Phil, got the manuscript updated and in publishable form after the conference. The search for printing funds continues.

So that's the way it was. The funds are still short but the effort phases into The Jay Hammond Bald Eagle Research Institute and money comes. The future seems bright.

Jim King  
October 1998